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THE CIA: Keyhole Caper

Just a year out of college, William Kampiles was working as a low-level "watch officer" at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., with access to secret intelligence reports from outposts all over the world. Then Kampiles appeared to sour on the intelligence game, and after eight months he resigned. But things are rarely what they seem in the world of espionage: a Federal grand jury last week indicted Kampiles for stealing technical material on the government's most advanced spy satellite and selling it to the Russians for \$3,000.

The case raised a host of puzzling questions about the CIA's internal security. Only a lower-rung GS-7 employee, Kampiles had access to a file cabinet containing an 85-page technical manual for the top-secret Keyhole-11 satellite. The FBI says Kampiles simply pocketed the manual one day and sold it to an operative at the Soviet Embassy in Athens last March after he left the CIA—even signing a receipt for the payment.

Confession: Law-enforcement sources say the CIA had no idea the manual was missing until Kampiles wrote to a friend in the agency and said he was selling false information to the Russians. The CIA called him back to Washington and the FBI questioned him. "I guess you could say he confessed," one Federal source said. Kampiles was later arrested and jailed in lieu of a \$1 million bond. His lawyer says Kampiles will plead not guilty to the charge of espionage, which carries a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Contrary to published accounts, NEWSWEEK learned, the satellite involved was not the six-year-old Big Bird but its successor, which has been operating for only two years.

It has infra-red cameras to detect missile silos, side-looking radar to pierce clouds with photographic clarity and still cameras that can capture details less than a foot long from 100 miles up.

Still, the CIA appeared to take the manual's loss in stride. Agency officials said they would make more frequent checks of classified documents but that there is a limit on the searches they can impose on employees. "What can you do?" lamented one CIA official. "When you come right down to it, it's a matter of trust." But some critics of the agency felt it should do better than that. "They're forever telling us how weak the Congress is" when it comes to protecting secrets, Sen. Malcolm Wallop of the Senate intelligence committee told The Washington Post last week. "To my knowledge nothing close to this has come out of either House."

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